

only grown half as fast as earnings across the private sector as a whole over the past 6 months.

When it comes to healthcare, it hasn't just been the broken promise of insurance for everyone. It has been a nonstop roller coaster of legislative proposals, all of which would strip coverage away from tens of millions of Americans, raise costs, and deny coverage for those with preexisting conditions.

On tax reform, all we have seen is a one-page outline and a budget proposal with reconciliation instructions setting up a process for jamming a partisan tax reform bill through Congress. That is a nonstarter, because to be successful any tax reform legislation must be bipartisan, as was the 1986 tax reform under President Reagan and Speaker O'Neill.

To top it all off, we considered and are considering this week an appropriations minibus without even having had a budget on this floor some 88 days after it was due. The Republicans promised regular order. In fact, they are pursuing no order. Republicans haven't even bothered to pass a budget, which is what we are supposed to do in the House before moving to appropriations.

So, Mr. Speaker, at the 6-month mark, we have only seen gridlock, no progress, chaos, and broken promises. Even some Republican Members—and perhaps many Republican Members—are growing as frustrated as the American people their party has failed.

Representative STEVE WOMACK from Arkansas said late last month that: "We'd better get our act together. We're not governing right now. We are stuck."

And Representative TOM REED of New York said: "The fact that we are not getting to these issues—healthcare, budget, tax reform—is frustrating. We came here to move the needle."

So what I am saying has been said by my Republican colleagues as well. Perhaps Representative TOM MASSIE put it most succinctly when he tweeted about his Republican colleagues: "They confuse activity with progress."

Republicans, Mr. Speaker, have failed to address the challenges facing the American people, and they have done nothing to improve the lives of those working hard to make it in America.

We should be considering legislation to create jobs and grow the economy. We should be working to improve and strengthen the Affordable Care Act, not replace it. That would be consistent with some three-quarters of Americans who believe that is what we ought to be doing. We should be working in a bipartisan way to reform our Tax Code and promote competitiveness for our American businesses that are competing in world markets.

Growth, job creation, as well as fiscal sustainability, that is what we should be seeking in a tax bill. We should be investing in infrastructure that lures

jobs back home from overseas. And, Mr. Speaker, we should be returning to regular order and an open process that Republicans have abandoned to the detriment of legislation and to our country. There have been more closed rules in this 7 months than have occurred in my 36 years in the Congress of the United States.

Mr. Speaker, the American people need a better deal, a better deal than they have gotten over the last 7 months. Seven months into this Congress, it is clear that House Republicans are not on the side of working people. In the words of New York Times columnist David Brooks, one of the most conservative columnists at The New York Times, last week he said this: "Republicans offer nothing but negativity, detachment, absence, and an ax."

Democrats, on the other hand, are offering the American people, as I said, a better deal, one focused on helping all of our people—Make It In America—better jobs, better wages, and, yes, a better future. It is what Democrats have always done when Democrats have been entrusted to lead. There is a history, a track record to back it up.

Mr. Speaker, I want to show my colleagues that rhetoric is cheap—or talk is cheap, as we say—but performance is really what we ought to look to. I want to bring some charts here to the attention of our colleagues—and, indeed, to the American people as well—to what Democrats have always done.

This chart, number one, shows that Democrats perform better on economic growth. Now, that is easy to say, but this graph shows exactly from Truman to Obama, the blue. You can see under Eisenhower, economic growth was about a third, or maybe 40 percent. Kennedy-Johnson and Johnson much greater than Nixon and Nixon-Ford. Carter, greater than either Nixon or Nixon-Ford. And Carter, to the surprise of many, had just about the same GDP growth as Reagan, of which my Republican friends proudly talk. And then what happened under Bush I? Down. Then what happened under Clinton? Up, GDP growth. Under Bush II, down; under Obama, up.

That is not campaign rhetoric. Those are the statistics that show that the economy has performed better under Democrats.

Now, Democrats perform better on the stock market, the stock market whom, Mr. Trump, likes to point to today. It is doing well. Why? Because the Obama economy, as you just saw, was doing well and the expectations were good.

If you look at this chart, things were better on the stock market under the Democrats. Truman, greater growth in the stock market, Eisenhower less. Kennedy-Johnson, Johnson up; Nixon down. Nixon-Ford—Nixon-Ford had negative growth in the stock market, and then Carter, growth. And, yes, Reagan and Bush I had growth, but guess what. Then Clinton had better

growth. And then guess what. Bush II, again, like Nixon-Ford, negative growth in the stock market.

What did that mean? That meant 401(k)s were worth less for retired people, and their security was less secure because the stock market went in the tank. And then what happened under Obama? The stock market went up.

Now, lastly, I wanted to show this statistic. And this is a stark statistic because it shows that, under Democratic Presidents, every segment, every wage level in America saw appreciation. Now, this only goes back to 1967.

So if we go to the lowest quintile, it went up higher under Democrats than Republicans in every quintile. And guess what. The highest quintile did better under Democrats, just as the lower quintile did better. But what you see is everybody did better. The only negative, of course, was under Republicans, where the second quintile went down over their years in office.

So if you compare all of these, Mr. Speaker, it is not campaign rhetoric. It is not rhetoric on this floor, but it is economic facts, economic statistics. Economic reports show that, when we promised a better deal, we delivered a better deal.

So as we look back on the past 6 months of Republicans' broken promises and failures to govern, let's remember there is, indeed, a better deal to be had. Democrats are ready to work with our Republican colleagues and with the administration to make progress.

Mr. Speaker, I have been here 36 years, and one of the things I am proudest of, my Republican colleagues, many of them say: "HOYER will work with us in a way to compromise and make progress for our country." But if our Republican colleagues continue to be unwilling to work in a bipartisan way, we are going to offer a clear and proven alternative—a proven alternative.

I hope my Republican colleagues will return from the August district work period ready to ensure that the American people get a better deal and work with us constructively to get them that better deal.

RECOGNIZING THE IMPORTANCE OF THE AMERICAN FARMER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. FITZPATRICK) for 5 minutes.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, with the fall season fast approaching, Bucks County's robust agricultural community is in full swing with the impending harvests, summer fairs, community projects, and recognition of the important work of the American farm family.

In a few weeks, Bucks County will celebrate their 69th annual Middletown Grange Fair. From Wednesday, August 16, through Sunday, August 20, attendees from across our community

will have the amazing opportunity to come together to enjoy live entertainment, timeless carnival rides, tons of local food, animal demonstrations, and 4-H projects on display.

Crowds will gather to see the antique equipment competition and exhibits in hundreds of categories ranging from a variety of vegetables, tomatoes, fresh flowers, and livestock to handcrafted quilts, jewelry, and woodwork.

Mr. Speaker, as an annual attendee, I have seen firsthand how the Grange Fair brings our community together to enjoy the refreshing success of our local agricultural community. It is an event that helps people gain a better appreciation of the importance of agriculture and how the agricultural industry sustains our local economy—not to mention all of the jobs that it creates.

We love our farmers in Bucks County. They have contributed so much to our community. They are an indispensable part of Bucks County's past, and they will remain an indispensable part of Bucks County's future.

INVEST IN THE NATION'S INFRASTRUCTURE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. COSTA) for 5 minutes.

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring attention to our Nation's infrastructure. I am talking about our roads, our bridges, our rail corridors, our waterways and dams, the investments that over two centuries have made America great, the greatest economy in the world.

We have a long history of investing in the infrastructure in America, starting with the canal and rail systems in the 19th century, the highways and air transportation systems in the 20th century. However, over the last 25 years, we have lived off the infrastructure investments our parents and grandparents made in the previous generations.

Why? Because there has been a lack of political will here in Washington, D.C., to make new investments. But Congress, working with the President, must face this challenge head-on.

I believe there is bipartisan support for infrastructure investment, having been part of a bipartisan conversation this year with Members of Congress and with the administration. There is an attempt to offer a proposal to make major investments in our Nation's infrastructure.

We are talking about four different areas. First, there needs to be an incentive component. I strongly support incentivizing States and local governments to provide their own funding for these efforts. We know infrastructure projects move forward most effectively when local, State, and the Federal Government all do their part.

In the San Joaquin Valley in my district, Merced, Madera, and Fresno Counties have all increased their local sales tax to pay for critical transpor-

tation projects. Earlier this year, California enacted a bill to increase State gas tax and vehicle fees to provide over \$52 billion over the next 10 years in California for much-needed transportation projects. And while more needs to be done in California, we know that, if we provide incentives across the country, States ought to come up and do their part as well.

The second focus of the administration's action is to support projects in rural areas. On Wednesday last week, the Agriculture Committee held a hearing in which we discussed strategic infrastructure investments in rural areas with a goal of increasing opportunities. The importance of investing in our rural areas cannot be overstated. Too often, rural America gets left behind in the infrastructure and development conversation. I know because I represent a large part of rural America in the San Joaquin Valley in California.

The third focus is transformative projects, projects that make creative and dramatic changes. I have always supported and will continue to support these projects, such as high-speed rail in California, California WaterFix.

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Water is so critical to the West, especially in the San Joaquin Valley. Water provides the food that we have on America's dinner table every night. It is a national security issue.

These projects support deeper, systemic change, and they can have a large-scale and lasting impact on the future development of our Nation. They are investments in our future, like those our parents and grandparents made in the past.

Lastly, the administration talks about a loan program. These can be helpful.

Overall, I support these four components. But first we must not pick winners and losers when improving our Nation's infrastructure. This is, of course, very challenging. We need to have a policy that must rank priorities and decide how much we spend and where we spend.

We also must establish criteria to ensure infrastructure decisions promote fair distribution and cost effectiveness, doing the most good in critical areas.

Second, while I support public-private partnerships, they should not provide subsidies to projects that the private sector would already finance themselves.

Sound infrastructure is literally and figuratively the foundation of our Nation's economy. It is what has made America the greatest economy in the world. Countries around the world are making investments in their infrastructure while the United States sits on the sidelines engaging in a political debate that does not reflect the reality of the policy choice we have and the decisions we must make.

Mr. Speaker, we must come together as Democrats and Republicans to ad-

dress these serious problems of our Nation's infrastructure, and as Americans in a bipartisan way because no transportation system, no water infrastructure system, no improvement in our energy grid, and all the other elements of our infrastructure are Democratic or Republican. They are the basis of an investment in America, and that is what we should be doing as Members of Congress with this administration.

So let's act as legislators. Let's act and show that we can work together in a bipartisan fashion. Let's show some profiles in courage.

THE BILL IMPORTANT TO ALL AMERICANS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, as we prepare the next farm bill, I rise today to speak about the impact that agriculture has on the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, our farmers, our economy, and our communities.

Agriculture is the number one industry in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. We proudly boast 58,200 farms, totaling more than 7.7 million acres of farmland. These farms contribute to a total economic impact of \$45 billion from production, food processing, marketing, transportation, and manufacturing.

Mr. Speaker, the farm bill affects everyone in Pennsylvania in various ways, just as it does families throughout the United States of America.

It provides a safety net for farmers and ranchers during difficult times. It supports infrastructure and economic development in rural communities. It incentivizes good conservation practices to protect our farmland and our environment. It helps provide access to nutritious, quality food for the least fortunate among us, as well as breakfasts and lunches for our schoolchildren.

The farm bill's effects can be felt beyond the ag industry. In 2015, the USDA rated the market value of all agricultural production in Pennsylvania at \$8.7 billion, and agricultural exports contributed \$2 billion to the State economy.

The strengthening impact that agriculture has on the Pennsylvania economy is significant and undeniable, yet it is only one example of agriculture's vast influence on the lives of everyone in the Commonwealth. Agriculture employs our residents, provides better health for our communities, and promotes agricultural exports.

Agriculture touches the lives of millions of Americans, and not just those who work as farmers or ranchers.

Pennsylvania's farmers look to the farm bill to protect their livelihood from weather disasters, to provide them a safety net when times are hard, and to ensure their ability to support their families and their communities.